



Chapter 2

The Returned God

第二話

遠く来る神



1992-1993





WHO'S
THERE...?



SFX: <CRYING>



OH,
PRIEST,
IT'S JUST
YOU...



WHAT?



THAT
MEANS YOU
NEED TO
TAKE OFF
ALL YOUR
CLOTHES!

YOU KNOW, IF
YOU REALLY
WANT TO TALK
TO THE GODS,
THERE WAS TO
BE NOTHING
BETWEEN YOU
AND THE
DIVINITY



SPX "GREAT!" SPX "TRIP" ONLY





WHAT DO YOU WANT, MITSUKA-KUN?



WHAT ARE YOU SIGHING ABOUT? AREN'T THOSE ALL FAN LETTERS FROM SCHOOL-GIRLS?



HM? AREN'T THEY FROM FANS OF YOUR NOVELS?



YUP. HRY, WHILE YOU'RE HERE, HELP ME TRASH THOSE LETTERS.

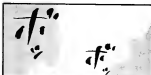


AH... WHY DON'T I EVER GET LETTERS LIKE THAT...?

...WELL, YEAH, BUT FAN LETTERS ARE ALWAYS FULL OF THE SAME STUPID CRAP. ALL THOSE WOMEN THINK THEY'RE IN LOVE WITH ME BECAUSE I'M A LITTLE FANOUS...

THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW ME!





SFX: "CLAP PLAP"



SFX: "CLAP PLAP PLAP"





SO IT'S AN IMPOSSIBLE MURDER?



ALL SIX CORPSES
WERE FOUND
LOOKED INSIDE THE
VILLAGE SHRINE...
BUT ONE OF THE
DEAD MEN WAS THE
LOCAL PRIEST, AND
HE HAD THE ONLY
KEY.



ALLOW ME TO
SUMMARIZE
THE CASE: IN
THE VILLAGE
OF HIRUKAMI,
SIX MEN
WERE FOUND
WITH THEIR
THROATS
SLIT.

THERE WERE
NO WIT-
NESSES...
AND NO
SUSPECTS.



SERIOUSLY,
JUST WRITE
IT YOUR-
SELF...



ALL YOU NEED
TO DO IS COME
UP WITH A GOOD
RESOLUTION,
AND IT WOULD
MAKE A GREAT
DETECTIVE
STORY!





SFX - (CREAK CREAK)

SFX - (CREAK)





404 -CHLOE-







NO, NOT AN
ACQUAINTANCE...
SHE'S MY LITTLE
SISTER!

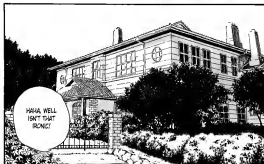
IS SHE AN
ACQUAIN-
TANCE OF
YOURS?



LOOK AT THIS. A
WHILE AGO, I
GOT A FAN
LETTER FROM A
GIRL LIVING IN
THIS VILLAGE -
THE SENDER'S
NAME IS ISAWA
NAMI.



NAMI
WROTE
YOU A
LETTER?



HAAA, WELL
ISN'T THAT
IRONIC!







AND AS IT SO
HAPPENS, THE
GIRL CHOSEN AS
THIS YEAR'S
PRIESTESS WAS
THE SISTER OF
MY STUDENT,
IZAWA-KUN.



IT'S JUST
ONE OF
OUR MANY
CHARMING
LOCAL
CUSTOMS.

WELL... THIS IS A
VILLAGE OF
FISHERMEN, SO IN
YEARS WHEN THE
HARVEST IS POOR,
IT'S TRADITION FOR
A PRIESTESS TO
SECLUDE HERSELF
IN THE SHRINE BY
THE SEA FOR ONE
NIGHT TO PRAY
FOR A GOOD
CATCH.



THE MEN ARE
SUPPOSED TO
STAND WATCH
OUTSIDE TO
PROTECT THE
PRIESTESS
DURING HER
VIGIL... THAT'S
ALL.



OH...
WELL...

YOU
SEE...



...I SEE. SO
WHAT WERE THE
SIX MURDERED
MEN DOING
THERE AT THE
TIME?



I THINK SO TOO, BUT WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

HM.. I HAVE THE DISTINCT FEELING THAT THERE'S MORE TO THIS STORY, HE'S HIDING SOMETHING.



IT'S A REFERENCES TO THE GOD HIRUKO. ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THE GOD IZANAGI-NO-UKOTO AND HIS WIFE IZANAMI-NO-UKOTO CREATED THE LAND AND GAVE BIRTH TO THE OTHER GODS. THEIR VERY FIRST CHILD WAS HIRUKO.

BY THE WAY, NAGISA-KUN, DO YOU KNOW WHY THIS PLACE IS CALLED "HIRUKAMI VILLAGE?"

WE'LL SEE..



NO... I DON'T KNOW WHY...



OH, I SEE... SO THAT'S WHY THE MAIN SHRINE OF THE VILLAGE IS DEDICATED TO EBISU.



NOT ONLY DID HIRAKO SURVIVE, BUT HIS BODY HEALED AND HE BECAME KNOWN AS THE GOD EBISU.

BUT HIRAKO WAS BORN WITH TERRIBLE DEFORMITIES, SO HIS PARENTS PLACED HIM IN A BOAT MADE OF REEDS AND ABANDONED HIM TO THE SEA.



... BUT THERE'S ANOTHER MEANING TO "EBISU" AS WELL...

INDEED, IT'S VERY COMMON FOR FISHING VILLAGES TO BUILD SHRINES IN HONOR OF EBISU.

TODAY, EBISU IS REVERED AS A GOD WHO PROTECTS FISHERMEN AND ENSURES A GOOD CATCH. HE'S ALSO A GOD OF LUCK AND PROSPERITY.



IT'S WHAT FISHERMEN CALL THE BLOATED, DEFORMED CORPSES OF THOSE WHO DIE AT SEA...



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SFX "SPLASH"



THAT
MARK ON
HIS ARM...
IT'S NEW.



THERE'S
SOMEBODY IN
THAT CAVE...
A WOMAN.



SFX "SPLASH SPLASH"











THE GIRL WAS THE
LOCAL PRIESTESS,
AND ON THE NIGHT
THAT THOSE SIX MEN
WERE KILLED, SHE
WAS PERFORMING A
RITUAL IN THE SHRINE
NEAR THIS CAVE.
MOST LIKELY, THIS
POOR WOMAN IS THE
PRIESTESS.

IT'S
SIMPLE,
REALLY...



HOW CAN
YOU BE SURE
THAT THE
CORPSE IS
THAT KID'S
MOTHER?



WHAT?
WHAT IS
IT, YACHIKU?



WHAT
THE
FUCK...

OH SHIT... THAT
MEANS THAT
SOMEBODY
WAS KEEPING
HER ALIVE IN
HERE FOR
MONTHS...



WELL, NOW I
HAVE SOME
IDEA OF WHAT
HAPPENED IN
THAT LOCKED
ROOM...

...I'VE
SEEN
ENOUGH.
LET'S GO,
YACHIKU.



YES... AND I
BELIEVE THAT
THE PERSON
WHO KILLED
HER IS ALSO
RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE
DEATHS OF
THOSE SIX MEN.

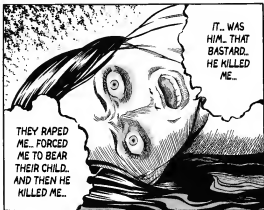












IT... WAS
HIM... THAT
BASTARD...
HE KILLED
ME...

THEY RAPED
ME... FORCED
ME TO BEAR
THEIR CHILD...
AND THEN HE
KILLED ME...



YOU RAPED
HER... AND
THEN YOU
KILLED HER...



MAJOR, YOU'RE
FAMILIAR WITH THE
LEGENDS OF THIS
VILLAGE, AREN'T
YOU? AND SO
YOU'D BE AWARE
OF THE ANCIENT
RITUAL USED TO
SUMMON THE GOD
HIRUKO...

YES... AND
I KNOW
WHY HE
DID IT.



AHH-HH!!

PLEASE,
HAVE
MERCY!!



THEN,
THEY'LL
TAKE HER
TO THE
SACRED
CAVE.



THERE,
THEY'LL
IMPRISON
HER FOR
HALF A
YEAR.



AND
WHEN SHE'S
GROWN TO
BE VISIBLY
PREGNANT



FIRST, THE
MEN OF THE
VILLAGE'S
FOUNDING
FAMILIES WILL
RAPE A
WOMAN IN THE
SHRINE.



SPY - 45087



SPY - 45087



SPY - 45087



THEY'LL
CUT HER
OPEN AND
REMOVE
THE FETUS.



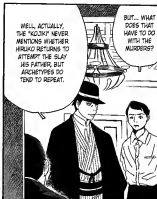
THEN
THEY'LL
PLACE THE
CHILD IN A
BASKET OF
REEDS AND
SET IT OUT
ON THE
SEA...



SPY - PELLUCID



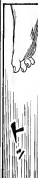








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B-BUT...
IT'S GOING
TO COME
BACK FOR
YOU...

JUST
LET IT
GO!

WAIT!
THAT'S
ENOUGH!



THERE IT
IS! IT'S
GETTING
AWAY!!



...I
KNOW.



...AND IT'S
ALRIGHT.



OH, THEY
HAD
ANOTHER
JOB.

SASAYAMA-SAN
AND YACHI-KUN
AREN'T COMING
BACK ON THE
TRAIN WITH US?



THEY'RE
GOING TO DO
THE FUNERAL
RITES FOR
NAM-SAN
AND HER
CHILD.



...WELL,
THERE ARE
MANY LEGENDS
ABOUT WOMEN
GIVING BIRTH TO
INCARNATIONS
OF GODS...



...DO YOU
REALLY BELIEVE
THAT THING
WAS A REBORN
GOD...?

I GUESS WE
CAN LEAVE THE
CLEANUP TO
THE "DETECTIVE
MONK" THEN.





AND SO IZANAGI AND IZANAMI DECIDED TO CREATE CHILDREN. "YOU AND I WILL CIRCLE THE PILLAR OF HEAVEN," SAID IZANAGI TO HIS SISTER, "AND WHEN WE MEET ON THE OTHER SIDE, WE SHALL BE MARRIED." AND SO IZANAGI WENT FROM THE RIGHT, AND IZANAMI WENT FROM THE LEFT, AND WHEN THEY MET AGAIN, IZANAMI WAS THE FIRST TO SPEAK. "NOW YOU ARE MY HUSBAND, AND I AM YOUR WIFE." "YOU ARE MY WIFE, AND I AM YOUR HUSBAND," ANSWERED IZANAGI. BUT AFTERWARDS, IZANAGI REALIZED THAT IT WAS UNLUCKY FOR A WOMAN TO SPEAK FIRST IN THE MARRIAGE RITUAL. SURE ENOUGH, THE CHILD THAT WAS BORN TO THEM, HIRUKO, WAS TERRIBLY DEFORMED. THEY PLACED HIM IN A BOAT OF REEDS AND ABANDONED HIM TO THE SEA. THEIR NEXT CHILD, ANAZIMA, WAS NOTHING BUT SEAFOAM. THESE TWO ARE NOT COUNTED AMONG THE CHILDREN OF THE GODS.

THE TALE OF IZANAGI AND IZANAMI, FROM THE
KOTIKI

Translator's Notes

46 The chant she's singing is a "koto-ura," a traditional spell used in the Shinto rituals of Ise shrines. The priestess performing the koto-ura must spend the night in the shrine and asks the gods to divine whether particular people and/or objects are spiritually pure. The chant roughly translates to "This is a serious matter, I beseech the gods of heaven and earth to descend to their splendid seat."

53 Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in The Rue Morgue" is regarded as the first detective story. Two women are found with their throats cut by a razor, and witnesses give conflicting testimony. Finally, the detective hero deduces that the women were killed by an escaped orangutan that had been trained to shave its owner's beard with a razor. The orangutan hadn't had malicious intent—it was merely a frightened animal that had been trained to do a specific task, so the whole incident was a tragic accident.

61 According to Shinto legend, the siblings Izanagi and Izanami were among the first gods to be created. During their marriage ritual, Izanami (the female god) spoke first. This breach of gender roles was a bad omen, and the couple's first child, Hirako (the Leech-Child), was born with terrible deformities. They placed the baby in a basket of reeds and set him out to sea to die, but Hirako eventually washed back to shore. His deformities were healed, and he became the god Ebisu, protector of sailors and fishermen. The beer company Yebisu is named after this god.



MATSUOKA KUNIO
youkai
exterminator

In the unlikely event that Dark Horse decides to legally translate this series, please buy it! We're just doing this because we're huge Kurosagi Corp. Delivery Service fans.